

## 2021 SAMHSA SOAR JULY E-NEWS

### Demonstrate SOAR Impact: Submit Your Outcomes

## EVERY PERSON COUNTS

### SOAR OUTCOMES COLLECTION

Report your SOAR-assisted  
SSI/SSDI applications with  
decisions between July 1, 2020,  
and June 30, 2021, in OAT!

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is working with SOAR providers across the country to collect 2021 SOAR outcomes! We are counting SOAR-assisted Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) applications with decisions received between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021. Report your outcomes in the SOAR Online Application Tracking (OAT) system to demonstrate the power of the SOAR model. If you have questions, please reach out to your SOAR Liaison to help you through the process!

Enter Your Outcomes Today!

Want to learn more about OAT? The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center has created resources to support first-time and experienced OAT users. If you have successfully completed the SOAR Online Course and are using the SOAR model to assist with applications, join us at the next SOAR OAT and Outcomes Orientation on July 20 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET. Learn how to access and use the SAMHSA SOAR OAT system, why it is beneficial to track SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI application decisions, and how to run reports to highlight SOAR success.

Please Register Here

Also available are the [OAT user guide](#) and [OAT reports guide](#) that you can use as reference materials when entering your SOAR-assisted applications into OAT!

### Bureau of Disability Adjudication Collaboration in Nevada

While conducting her disability determination analysis on a SOAR-assisted claim, Julie Kujath (Las Vegas Department of Developmental Services Adjudicator 3) applied an obscure but relevant [Program Operations Manual System \(POMS\)](#) to allow the claim! What is a POMS? A POMS is a primary source of information used by Social Security employees to process claims

for Social Security benefits. The POMS Julie applied is called [Special Medical Vocational Profiles](#), which are rare combinations of adversities that, along with impairments, result in a finding of “disabled.” In May, Julie shared this story during Nevada’s monthly SOAR Practitioner meeting. Julie stated, “While it is rare to meet one of these special profiles, the better educated you are, the better you can advocate for your claimants.” Julie wrote an article to make SOAR providers familiar with these special medical vocational profiles so you can better provide adequate information for claimants who may satisfy the requirements of these profiles. Should you have any questions, please reach out to your TA Center Liaison.

[Read Julie's Full Article](#)

## Engagement Strategies for Providers from Different Backgrounds Working with American Indian or Alaska Native Communities and Organizations

Today within the United States, 574 federally recognized tribes and over 5 million self-identified American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN) people live in urban, rural, and reservation-based communities. Each AI/AN community brings its own strong identity, culture, and contributions to its tribe and broader society, yet they are often unseen or inadvertently overlooked when establishing access to social service programs. The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is working to change this disparity through collaboration with non-AI/AN providers to engage and foster strong relationships with AI/AN communities, organizations, and clients. For this change to be effective and ensure equitable access to social service programs, non-AI/AN providers need to consider the impact of historical trauma, understand the role of culture and identity, honor tribal sovereignty, recognize community protocols, and embrace culturally responsive, holistic healing methods that support recovery when working with AI/AN communities and clients.

Starting the engagement process begins with learning which AI/AN communities and organizations are in a service area and then reaching out to providers—such as tribal social workers, case managers, family service and behavioral health providers, AI/AN-serving child welfare representatives, or substance use prevention staff—about getting involved with SOAR. The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center recently published [several culturally tailored resources](#) to facilitate working with AI/AN communities and serving AI/AN clients. We encourage non-AI/AN providers to utilize the materials on the [SOAR for AI/AN communities](#) webpage in conjunction with the resources and directories below to enable providers to make the initial steps of engagement and outreach.

- [Federally Recognized Tribes](#)
- [Indian Child Welfare Act Designated Agent Listing](#)
- [Urban Indian Organizations](#)
- [Indian Health Service and Tribal or Urban Indian Health Program Facilities](#)

For additional cultural resources, engagement tools, or assistance locating and connecting with key stakeholders within an AI/AN community or organization, please [email Abigail Kirkman](#), assistant director, SAMHSA SOAR TA Center, or [email Kim Vigue](#), managing partner, Wolf River Consulting.

## SOAR Jobs



### New York

The Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project seeks a full-time disability advocate to assist and represent clients with mental health concerns in their applications for federal disability benefits (SSI/SSDI) using the SOAR model.

### Ohio

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) is seeking a full-time, self-motivated, experienced individual to provide coordination of training and technical assistance for the SOAR Ohio program. This position will assist agencies and staff who are working with anyone experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and/or preparing to exit institutions and living with mental illness and/or physical, developmental, and intellectual disabilities to successfully apply for SSI/SSDI using the SOAR model. The position is located in Columbus, Ohio, but COHHIO will be flexible about location for the first year.

## North Carolina

Coastal Disability Advocates is seeking a full-time case manager to represent disabled claimants experiencing homelessness in pursuit of SSDI, SSI, and Medicaid entitlements, ensuring that all steps are aggressively taken to secure a timely, favorable outcome to claims. The case manager will also maintain a schedule of routine updates with the agencies' census of awarded claimants to determine that they are receiving all appropriate social services and housing with the objective of reducing dependence on emergent care. This position will provide access to the secure proprietary IT platforms of New Hanover Regional Medical Center as well as those of the Social Security Administration. Technical proficiency with these will be essential in a timely manner.

## Virginia

Northern Virginia Family Service is seeking a full-time benefits counselor and SOAR advocate to work with the Community Housing team to help clients as they navigate public entitlement services and benefits counseling as part of a case management team; share basic public benefits knowledge (e.g., SNAP, TANF, SSI/SSDI, retirement, Unemployment Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid) with Community Housing staff; assist eligible clients in applying for SSDI and SSI using the SOAR model; and perform all activities related to compiling information and submitting applications for benefits.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#)!

## Sharing Our Successes



Carrie Moreno from VA Central Iowa Health Care System in Des Moines, Iowa, wrote in to share this incredible SOAR success story:

"Harold\* had gotten out of a long-term relationship and was experiencing homelessness, staying in a local area park and occasionally with family. He had no income and was unable to work when a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) doctor decided to connect him with a SOAR-trained case worker. Harold's cooperation made the SOAR application process very smooth. He had only been to the VA and one other medical facility since birth, making his

medical history easy to trace. Harold was also good about attending our scheduled appointments and signing necessary documents.

There was a slight delay in getting the final document submitted, while waiting for a response from the VA doctor about signing the Medical Summary Report. Once this was signed, the final document was sent off, and in less than a month Harold received his first check! While he is still working to secure permanent housing (he's only received two checks thus far), he expresses greater life satisfaction in having his own income. Harold knew he could get free clothing items from the VA, but purchases items on his own because it helps him feel empowered. He has since switched to the Direct Express® debit card and feels he will manage the money better on a card rather than cash in his pocket. We continue to work on housing applications. Harold hasn't ever been able to pursue housing on his own and is pleased that he will be able to enter a rental agreement independently, have his own space, and choose to have guests when he pleases."

Submit Your SOAR Success

\*Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All client names have been changed to protect anonymity.

## Events

### SOARing Over Lunch Conference Calls

July 13, 2021, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

The next SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call will take place on July 13, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. ET! The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center hosts this series of informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. Participants can join to ask about any SOAR-related question they may have.

Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar

## Get Social with the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

Hear more about what SAMHSA SOAR is up to via [@samhsagov](#) on Twitter, [@samhsa](#) on Facebook, and [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) on LinkedIn!



## Federal Updates

### Online Video Hearings—Information for Representatives

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has created a new webpage to assist representatives with understanding the online video hearing option and Microsoft Teams platform. The [online video hearing representative webpage](#) contains a wealth of information related to online video hearings, including training materials and a new step-by-step training video for representatives. According to SSA, "These new materials should give you the opportunity to quickly master Microsoft Teams and gain a deeper understanding of the online video hearing process."

Read more about the latest news for [hearing options during COVID-19!](#)



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Disclaimer: The SAMHSA SOAR Technical Assistance Center is sending this eNews with support from SAMHSA, HHS. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of HHS or SAMHSA.

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